ENORMOUS CHANGES at the Last Minute

Timing is everything. But as Cradle parents Michele Thoele and Puamuh Ghogomu learned, in adoption it is something that can’t be controlled and is far from perfect.

The couple did have the fortune of good timing by ending up in the same dorm as undergrads at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Michele grew up in downstate Springfield, where her parents still live. Puamuh was born in Houston and spent most of his formative years in his father’s native Cameroon, returning to the states at age 16 and settling with his family in Montgomery, Illinois.

Michele and Puamuh married a few years after graduation, and in 2008 their daughter Evie was born. Giving Evie a sibling proved challenging, however, when the couple experienced infertility. Michele had always wanted to adopt, having grown up with adopted cousins and a best friend who had four adopted siblings. “It was just so normal to me,” she recalls. Puamuh had reservations. The concept of legally adopting was foreign to him growing up. “In Cameroon,” he explained, “a child who needed a home would likely be taken in by someone in his or her extended family, including grandparents, aunts, cousins, etc.”

A highly proactive person, Michele did some research and signed them up for the next Sayers Center info meeting on August 31, 2013 (as a multiracial family, they knew they wanted to adopt a black or biracial baby). During the long drive to far south suburban Matteson, she prayed that the presenter would be good. But she also felt strongly that both of them had to be on board 100% to move forward.

Michele wasn’t disappointed. After listening to Nijole Yutkowitz, The Cradle’s VP of Inclusion and Community Development, Puamuh was ready to take the next step. He appreciated that Nijole kept it real, not just focusing on ideal adoption scenarios. They sent in their registration fee that same day and soon began the home study process.

Puamuh affectionately dubbed Michele the “project manager.” While he was at his job as an attorney, she was caring for Evie and navigating the large volume of adoption paperwork. When he came home at night, he would have “assignments” she had left for him on post-it notes. Since they were already parenting a child, some of the work didn’t feel completely relevant. Nonetheless, Michele is thankful for the preparation. “I would remind myself that this is an enormous thing The Cradle is facilitating and it’s on them to make sure it’s done right,” she said. “These kids deserve the best.” She and Puamuh are also thankful for the care and compassion Cradle birth parents receive during the decision-making process.

In May 2014, eight months after applying to The Cradle, they went on the waiting list. The family had recently returned from a trip overseas and just put their house on the market. What they didn’t know is that their son Isaac was already born and in The Cradle Nursery. The call from their counselor, Corinne Ferguson, came as a shock.

The birth mother, who was raising a young son, had chosen them because she felt their relationship was strong and loving, and she liked the fact that Isaac would have a big sister. She was also drawn to a photo in their profile of Puamuh’s father – an African man whose skin color resembled hers and Isaac’s.

(Continued on page 2)
ENORMOUS CHANGES at the Last Minute: continued from page 1

Michele and Puamuh had been prepared to wait for a year, not a matter of days. Prospective buyers were traipsing in and out of their home. Puamuh was especially busy at work. The decision facing them was a difficult one, not because of Isaac, who in their view was perfect. It was the timing.

Ultimately, they both realized that he was meant to be their baby. “There is no script for this,” Puamuh remarked. “Once there’s a baby waiting, you don’t get to determine how this will fit in my schedule.”

They were given the go-ahead to visit Isaac on June 18, which happened to be Evie’s birthday. “I got a baby for my birthday!” the 6-year-old proudly announced to the guests at her bowling party. After the party Michele and Puamuh went to The Cradle, where they held and fed Isaac for the first time. Both cried. They stayed for hours and didn’t want to leave. The next day – which was also their 10th wedding anniversary – they were able to bring him home.

A second big surprise came several months later, when Corinne called Michele on a Friday evening and asked to come over. This wasn’t unusual, since the family had become friends with Corinne through Isaac’s adoption and post-placement visits. She sat Michele down and calmly told her that Isaac’s birth mom was pregnant and hoped they would consider adopting this baby, too. Stunned, Michele told Corinne, “You have to stay. You have to tell Puamuh.” He was still at work.

When he got home and heard the news, he was in disbelief. The couple decided they wouldn’t talk about it for the next 24 hours, as each needed time to reflect on their own. They got a babysitter for Evie and Isaac and made dinner reservations. Driving to the restaurant, Michele could no longer remain silent. She already felt that this child was meant to be theirs as well, even though the siblings would only be 11 months apart. Puamuh concurred. “If I learned anything from Isaac, it’s to just say ‘yes.’ I feel that what we went through with him prepared us for Camille.”

Michele and Puamuh had not yet met Isaac’s birth mother in person, and very much wanted to. She agreed, and the meetings went well. She even invited them to be in her hospital room with her when Camille was born. “She’s a very strong woman and very sure of herself,” says Michele. “She really seems at peace with her decision.”

Camille came home on April 6, 2015. Her parents describe her as sweet, easygoing and fearless. She wants to do everything Isaac is doing, even though her big brother is always on the move – a “force of nature” with a big personality and an equally big heart. He is also very protective of Camille. Michele and Puamuh text photos and updates to the children’s birth mom. Evie, nearly 8, is a wonderful big sister, and gets to be like a little kid again with two toddlers in the house.

As Puamuh observed, “There’s no perfect timing for any of this. That’s just how life happens.” And he and Michele couldn’t be any happier with their busy life and three beautiful children.

Thanks to the generosity of Cradle donors, Isaac and Camille’s birth mom received compassionate, nonjudgmental counseling and support; Isaac received six weeks of nurturing care in The Cradle Nursery; and Michele and Puamuh received the preparation and guidance they needed to welcome two babies into their family in under a year. We invite you to read more about The Cradle’s activities, accomplishments and challenges in 2015 on the Annual Report pages that follow.

Puamuh and Michele, center, along with Michele’s parents, Mike and Mary Thoele, attended The Cradle’s “Raising Black Boys” roundtable on Feb. 18, 2016 (turn to pg. 4 for more info).

On the cover, masthead photo: Cradle babies Abigail (in the hat) and Layla were Nursery mates who both went home with their families in March 2015. Beside each girl is her big brother – Cole (l) and Connor (r).
Dear Friends,

Like the family in our cover story, The Cradle is going through a period of significant change.

First and foremost is the departure of our longtime President, Julie Tye, in May. The Cradle grew and changed considerably during Julie’s 23-year tenure, reasserting its position as a leader in the ethical practice of adoption, as well as in the education and preparation of adoptive parents. Saying goodbye to Julie is very difficult; however, as a visionary leader, she recognizes that a change in leadership can be healthy for an organization. We wish her the very best as she assumes her new role as President of the Hadley Institute for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Cradle Chief Operating Officer Merrilee Hepler has agreed to serve as Interim CEO while a search committee is convened to identify candidates.

Julie is leaving The Cradle in a strong, forward-looking position, as a result of the strategic planning process that took place in 2015. By taking a critical look at all aspects of our internal operations and programs, as well as the external adoption environment, the task force set out to determine what The Cradle needs to do and look like in the future in order to have an impact on the welfare of children and families in a financially sustainable way.

We emerged with a renewed commitment to The Cradle’s legacy program of domestic adoption and a clearer understanding of the ongoing needs of children and families. This is reflected in our modified Mission Statement:

**With our deep history in adoption as our foundation,**

we will advance the well-being of children by compassionately delivering exceptional education, guidance and lifelong support to build, preserve and strengthen their families.

The Cradle will continue to offer Family Building services through the options counseling we provide to pregnant women; the adoption services we provide to parents; and the nurturing care provided to infants in our one-of-a-kind Nursery. You can read about these services on pages 5-7 of this report.

Additionally, we will increase our focus in the area of Family Strengthening by expanding our therapeutic practice in the Center for Lifelong Adoption Support (CLAS) and broadening the curriculum offered through AdoptionLearningPartners.org (ALP). Please turn to page 10 to learn more.

In the coming year, we will be sharing news of other family strengthening programs designed to provide education, resources and support to different types of families. On page 4 you can read about the first of these programs, Our Children, and the successful kick-off event we held in February.

Your support makes growth and change possible. We are excited about the future and deeply grateful to have you as our partners on this journey.

With our sincere thanks,

Caryn Rowe Africk  
Chair, The Cradle Board of Directors

Julie S. Tye  
President, The Cradle

Joel E. Solomon  
Chair, The Cradle Foundation Board of Directors

Brooke Voss  
President, The Cradle Foundation

Max and Clara are two of the 70 Cradle babies placed through our domestic adoption program in FY2015.

“As I reflect on my long tenure, I see the thousands of individuals The Cradle has touched: children with special needs who are now in families; frightened pregnant women who found peace and support; and so many beautiful families. I think of the worldwide impact of ALP. Lives have been changed, forever, because of our compassionate and ethical services, and the generous donors who made that care possible. It has been a great honor to serve as The Cradle President.” - Julie Tye

To make a gift in honor of Julie’s 23 years of service to The Cradle, please use the enclosed envelope or go to cradlefoundation.org/julietye.
The seeds for the *Our Children* initiative were planted early in 2015, and grew out of a perplexing question: Why is there such a strong preference for adopting girls vs. boys - and especially for parents looking to adopt a black child?

At The Cradle, the fact of the matter is that in FY2015, 13 of the 25 African American or biracial babies placed with our families were boys. Furthermore, 52% of those babies were adopted by white families.

A survey last year of all Cradle families raising black children revealed that the majority have experienced racism and feel compelled to advocate for change. Many fear for the safety and well-being of their black sons.

Michele Thoele, the Cradle mom featured in our cover story, worries about the future for her two-year-old son, Isaac: 

“The most upsetting thought to me is that one day people will see Isaac as dangerous, and that we can’t protect him from that. To me he’s just this loving, fun, big kid with a big personality, and to think that anyone would ever see him walking down the street and feel scared breaks my heart.”

The Cradle launched *Our Children: An Education & Empowerment Series* to help families better understand and prepare for the realities and injustices their black children may experience in the world. This multi-year series of programs and events will include roundtables, webcasts, film screenings and special guest speakers.

The kick-off event, “Raising Black Boys: A Roundtable Discussion,” took place on February 18, 2016 at The Northern Trust in Chicago and featured five distinguished African American men – a business executive, a police commander, an educator, an attorney and a community development veteran. They talked about their own experiences growing up and as the fathers of black sons today. They also addressed concerns raised by our families.

We received excellent feedback from among the 200+ guests who attended, many of whom are eager for the conversation to continue.

*This particular discussion was important to me because there are so many black boys and men in my life that I love and stand behind. As the mother of a black daughter, I know she will grow up alongside friends and, perhaps even someday, partners who may encounter heartbreaking moments of injustice, just as she may, herself. It’s my job to know how best to support her and our loved ones as they grow into the strong, whole-hearted individuals they are.*

—Anna Bonick, Cradle parent

A live webcast on Raising Black Boys will be held in early May; a recorded version will then be available on adoptionlearningpartners.org. To learn more about this and future events in the series, visit www.cradle.org/ourchildren.
Meet a few “Class of 2015” Cradle Babies

Twins Kearra and Sofie were born 4 minutes apart and spent 25 days in The Cradle Nursery before going home with Lorie and Rob Pearce on January 15.

As we reflect upon our blessings we can’t help but be reminded of the long journey we set off upon. The Cradle has been a phenomenal organization through the entire process of bringing the twins home.

Kearra (right) is a true oldest child; she is quiet, independent, and leads her younger sister. She is our escape artist, future interior decorator and night owl. Sofie is our chatterbox and enjoys spending time with us cuddling on the couch. She is slow to wake up in the morning, and not happy about it until she can give one of us a big hug.

Kenyatta and Victor Matlock became the proud parents of their adorable son Logan on June 27.

Logan spent his first six weeks in The Cradle Nursery and the staff was incredible! He is now a very happy, energetic ten-month-old who loves music and exploring his surroundings. He also gives the best hugs and kisses to Mommy and Daddy!

Although the adoption process was a very stressful time, the structured classes, the counselors and the army of happy adoptive families that serve as mentors gave us tremendous support. The Cradle continues to be a part of our family through its post adoption resources and networking with other Cradle families.

Baby Keanan was just one week old when he went home from The Cradle on August 14 with his mom and dad, Maureen and Chettha Saetia. Now, at 8 months, this happy little boy never stops smiling.

We love and cherish every moment, from the beginning of our journey with our counselor Sue until seeing our son’s cute little face in our home. Keanan brings so much joy and happiness to our lives every day, and to everyone that sees his contagious smile! We are grateful to the counselors, nursery staff, and the entire Cradle team who provided outstanding support throughout each stage of the adoption process.

“...the adoption process was emotional and unpredictable, yet we never felt alone with The Cradle.”

—Kenyatta & Victor Matlock

Impact 2015

- **70 babies** went home with loving families through The Cradle’s domestic adoption program, including:
  - 25 African American or biracial, 24 Hispanic/Latino or biracial, 18 Caucasian and 3 Asian babies
  - 7 special needs placements, 4 sibling placements and 2 sets of twins
- **8 families** who adopted children internationally – 7 from China and 1 from Ethiopia – received pre-adoption preparation and post-placement support through The Cradle.
- The average age of our adoptive parents was 39 and the average wait time was **385 days**.
Safeguarding the Well-Being of Children: THE CRADLE NURSERY

“The Cradle Nursery staff gave Ava her first seven weeks of love and care and we couldn’t be more grateful for their dedication to our daughter before she came home to us. They gave her an amazing start to life during her transition between her first mom and our family.”

—Adoptive parent Daniella Cortez Alvarez

Baby Ava was born on August 21, 2015 and was admitted to the Nursery two days later. Port-wine birthmarks on her face indicated the possibility of Sturge-Weber syndrome, a rare disorder that can cause skin, eye and neurological abnormalities, including seizures and glaucoma. Making a definitive diagnosis, however, often isn’t possible until the child is around two. During her stay in the Nursery, Ava was examined by The Cradle’s pediatric geneticist, a dermatologist and an ophthalmologist.

Despite these risks, a couple from Nevada, Dani and Jay, were more than willing to take a chance on this little girl. A friend of Dani’s had shared The Cradle’s Facebook posting about seeking a family for “Baby A.” “I opened the link and saw Ava’s picture and felt instantly like I was looking at our daughter,” Dani recalls.

Ava did become Dani and Jay’s daughter, and on October 14 last year, Cradle staff gathered in the living room to share in the new family’s happiness.

“We absolutely LOVE working with The Cradle,” says Dani. “Our counselor Wendy was and continues to be an absolute delight and has been amazing in helping us navigate the adoption process. The kind of wrap-around support that The Cradle offered us, Ava’s first mother and Ava herself has been priceless.”

Although she is showing some early signs of seizure activity, which her parents are carefully monitoring, Ava is thriving. She is hitting all of her developmental milestones, sometimes early. A bright, chatty, inquisitive child, Ava is figuring out the world around her. “She’s very tactile and gets to know new people by very gently touching their faces,” her mom explains. “Also, I might be partial but she’s the most beautiful baby I’ve ever seen.”

To take a virtual tour of the Nursery, become a Nursery Angel, or donate items from our Nursery Wish List on Amazon, go to www.cradlefoundation.org/nurserytour. Thank you!

Impact 2015

- 87 babies – 46 boys and 41 girls – were admitted to The Cradle Nursery and received exceptional care.
- 11 of these babies had a large or extra degree of medical risk; all went home with loving families.
- The shortest Nursery stay was 1 day, the longest was 63 days and the average was 25 days.
- 57 babies were placed with adoptive families and 30 returned home with their birth families. Our goal is to help women and men determine whether placing or parenting their child is the best option for them.
- Nursery expenses in FY2015 totaled $735,000, or $2,013 per day. 28 generous donors made “Nursery Angel” gifts totaling $53,400 last year.
Lisa didn’t know she was pregnant and was astonished to learn that she was already 28 weeks along. Approaching her 40th birthday, and parenting two teenagers, she knew that she was not in a position to raise an infant. She started researching adoption agencies online and found The Cradle.

I read about the services The Cradle provides and the stories of former clients and felt like it could be a good option for me, so I called the hotline for more information. My counselor, Meg, called me the next day.

From our very first phone call, Meg was non-judgmental, informative, caring, and patient. She in no way pressured me to make any decisions before I was ready, and she helped me work through the overwhelming emotions involved in my situation. I lived a couple hours away from The Cradle, and Meg was always willing to come meet with me when I needed her to. She always made me feel like a priority.

I selected a couple from about 6 profiles I reviewed. What stood out most to me was the fact that they seemed to have values similar to mine... the importance they placed on family, their interests, and their views on parenting. As soon as I read their profile, I knew they were the right parents for the baby I was carrying.

The adoptive parents have offered to provide as much contact as I would like. For now, I just want to receive monthly emails and pictures – which I love!

Given the chance, I would not change a thing. I feel like everything happened the way it was supposed to and that my son is where he was always meant to be.

Meet Meg Hopps, LCSW, Expectant Parent Counselor

Meg came to The Cradle in 2012 after working as an adoption specialist with children in the foster care system. She works with Cradle expectant parent clients from the west side of Chicago to the western edge of Illinois. No two days are ever the same, and for Meg, the best part of her job is forming relationships with her clients.

“The thing I admire most about Lisa is her open-mindedness,” Meg says. “Like every client who comes to us, she knew very little about the adoption process when we first started meeting. As we got to know one another better she opened up a lot and stayed engaged in the counseling process until she made a permanent plan for her son.”

Impact 2015

- Lisa is one of the 1,158 women who contacted The Cradle in 2015 for guidance regarding an unintended pregnancy.
- Of those 1,158, 292 had an initial appointment with a Cradle counselor. Our birth parent clients receive, on average, 30 hours of compassionate, unbiased, non-coercive options counseling.
- The 68 Cradle birth mothers who made adoption plans in FY15 ranged in age from 18-46, with a median age of 28.5. 44 women (65%) were already parenting children.
Sustaining The Cradle:
THE CRADLE FOUNDATION & OUR FINANCES

“Our adoptive parents have since passed away, but not before instilling in us the importance this institution played in our lives. And, the need for The Cradle, and how magnificently they handle adoptions is, in my opinion, even greater today than it was back then.”

—1965 Cradle adoptee Karen Piper (née Swan)

The Cradle Foundation

Senior Development Officer Joe Flint has made two visits to Karen Piper and her family in Ohio, most recently in July 2015. A big part of the Foundation’s job is building relationships with our families and friends, listening to your stories and learning why The Cradle is important to you.

Karen was nearly three months old when she left The Cradle Nursery in August of 1965 to join her parents and big brother Geoff, who had been adopted two years earlier. It would be another 47 years until she returned to The Cradle, in the summer of 2012. Following that visit, Karen started making a generous annual gift.

The Cradle has always been a special place to me even though I had never set foot inside the establishment since leaving as an infant. I was a Cradle baby, a fact I had been told by my parents as far back as I can remember. Having the opportunity to adopt not just me, but my older brother as well, was a “game changer” for them. Even with all the trials and tribulations Geoff and I put them through, they treasured us and were forever grateful to The Cradle.

The Cradle works to ensure each child is placed in an environment of love and support. They create families. How amazing is that?!

And now, donors like Karen are helping to create new families. To see a list of the many generous donors and volunteers who supported The Cradle in 2015, go to cradlefoundation.org/AR2015. To each of you, we say thank you. You are the lifeblood of this organization and ensure its continuation.

FY2015 Financial Overview

The numbers on the opposite page speak for themselves: Fiscal 2015 was a difficult year. Operating needs last year necessitated a $2 million withdrawal of invested funds, while at the same time, a sharp decline in the market resulted in losses to our portfolio of over $400,000. The Cradle relies on income from our investments to help support critical but costly no-fee programs such as the Nursery and Expectant Parent Services. Shortfalls in individual giving and ALP revenue also played a part in the financial challenges we experienced last year.

Nonetheless, there were bright spots:

~ Placement activity increased 17% over FY14 (70 placements vs. 60)
~ Total program revenue exceeded our goal by $64,000
~ Expectant parent inquiries were 25% greater than in FY14 (1,158 vs. 928)
~ Our CLAS counseling practice grew by 65% (342 more appointments than in FY14)

The Cradle remains committed to building and strengthening families through a wide array of exceptional programs and services, which comprised 77% of our expenses in 2015. Because our fees simply cannot offset all of these expenses, however, we depend on support from Cradle donors and from our reserves. We have budgeted as prudently as possible for 2016, and set ambitious fundraising goals, to help The Cradle successfully execute its legacy programs while also embarking on new initiatives that will enable us to expand our reach and better serve children and families.

We greatly appreciate your commitment to The Cradle.

What does The Cradle mean to you? We would love to hear your story, too. Please email us at cradlefoundation@cradle.org

Karen with her husband Bruce and son Austin at Disneyland in 2014
Financial Results

Fiscal 2015
Actual

REVENUE

Public Support $1,638,375
Program Revenue 2,772,562
Investment Income (150,423)
Gains on Restricted Trusts (323,674)
Miscellaneous 10,042
Total Revenue 3,946,882

EXPENSES

Program Expenses 5,467,052
Management & General 545,764
Fundraising 1,047,347
Total Expenses 7,060,163

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS

$(3,113,281)

Net Assets - Beginning of Year $19,303,413
Net Assets - End of Year $16,190,132

Support for Expenses

Fiscal 2015
Actual

Funds for Operating Expenses Provided by:

Public support $1,638,375
Program revenue 2,772,562
Dividend & interest income 273,427
Investment draws 2,098,885
Total Expenses before depreciation (non-cash item) 6,783,249

Source of Support for Expenses

Composition of Expenses
Strengthening Families: CLAS & ALP

“I always feel more connected to our son after we leave our sessions with Mandy. I believe Theraplay has been connective for our family.”
—A Cradle Mom

Center for Lifelong Adoption Support (CLAS)

The Cradle offers therapeutic counseling for anyone touched by adoption, at any stage of life. Our clients tell us that we have helped them manage challenging behaviors, address mental health concerns, understand common struggles regarding identity and improve family connectedness. In 2015 we expanded our practice to include Theraplay®, a child and family therapy that uses games and activities to build attachment and strengthen family bonds. Cradle Adoption Therapist Mandy Jones, LCSW, is a certified Theraplay® therapist.

One Cradle family, whose son is five years old, has been working with Mandy for six months. The mom describes their experience:

“We use fun, engaging activities and simple tools to create the connection - something as simple as blowing bubbles and popping them, rubbing calming lotion onto each other’s hands, using a straw to blow a ping pong ball across the floor or drawing on a big piece of paper encouraging each other to take turns. We experience silly interactions, as well as calm and energetic ones. The exercises help our son with his sensory awareness and teach impulse control. We say that we have a play date with Mandy, rather than a Theraplay date, and he looks forward to it! It’s fun for him!”

Go to www.cradle.org/CLAS for more information about post-adoption services, including Theraplay®.

AdoptionLearningPartners.org (ALP)

Since its launch in 2002 with a single online course, “Conspicuous Families,” Adoption Learning Partners’ catalog has grown to include 25 courses and 34 recorded webinars on a wide array of adoption-related topics. In FY2015, ALP logged 32,007 total enrollments.

ALP also undertook an effort to streamline the process of registering and paying for webinars. Last year, 1,048 people registered for the six live webinars hosted by ALP. Most families learn of our webinars through our email blasts, and most open those emails on their mobile phones. In January 2016, we launched a new mobile-friendly micro-site that allows our emails to automatically log users into their accounts to make the purchase significantly easier than ever before.

Here’s a peek at the new format:

Stay tuned in the months ahead for news about an expansion of ALP’s curriculum.

Impact 2015

- CLAS clients scheduled 868 counseling appointments with Cradle Adoption Therapists (a 65% increase over FY14).
- 206 individuals – including adopted people or their descendants, birth family members and adoptive parents – had formal Informational Consultations with Nina Friedman, Director of Post Adoption Support.
- Nina also fielded 472 requests for services such as background reports and search and connection facilitation.
- Over 200 people attended the 8 parenting and teen workshops offered by The Cradle, on topics ranging from identity to discipline to African American hair care.
A Father’s Love

It was a quiet day in the last week of December when The Cradle received a wonderful surprise check for $200,000 from Cradle father, Stanley Grace, Jr. Stan has been a widower since 2008. He and his wife Sheila adopted two Cradle Babies, Becky in 1967 and Peter in 1969. Then Peter passed away in December 2014, an unexpected and very sad occasion for Stan and Becky. This gift was in honor of Peter’s life.

Stan devoted his long career to the family business, the John H. Grace Co. – a railroad tank car company started by his grandfather in 1910 that operated until 2004. Understandably, he loves model trains, but his other passions are fixing clocks and writing poetry. Stan has 60 poems he wrote over the years for Peter and Becky on their birthdays, and he would often send a copy to The Cradle with his annual gift. The poems chronicle the life of Peter and his talent for fixing up old cars, and when each of the kids went off to college or got a job. Stan said, “They weren’t anything great but just documented the experience of being a father.”

The birthday poems ended with one for Becky in 1996:

Becky really stumped me when last year she said,
“It’s time to quit writing those words in your head!
I’ll be 30, and just so you’ll know,
I don’t need reminding how fast time does go!”

For each stage of life since first she came home
Is recorded in verse in her birthday tome.
So I guess it’s time to put down my pen
And take all her poems and read them again.

Then put them in order so when she might look,
They’d tell her story in her own little book.
And I hope she’ll know from each word and thought,
All she’s given her parents, the joy she’s brought.

When we called to thank Stan for the gift, he said, “The Cradle is a wonderful organization. The kids have been the joy of my life.” The Cradle will install a brick in the courtyard in late summer, with this inscription.

Thank you, Stan, for honoring Peter and so generously remembering The Cradle!

Honor a loved one or special occasion by purchasing a commemorative brick. Please use the space below to indicate how you would like your brick to read. Order by August 15, 2016.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STANDARD BRICKS: Up to 3 lines of 13 characters</th>
<th>DELUXE BRICKS: Up to 5 lines of 13 characters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="Image" alt="Standard Brick" /></td>
<td><img src="Image" alt="Deluxe Brick" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_____ standard brick(s) (4” x 8”) at $150 each... $ ________

_____ deluxe brick(s) (8” x 8”) at $300 each ...... $ ________

Please return order form in enclosed envelope or mail to The Cradle, 2049 Ridge Ave., Evanston IL 60201. You can also order online at [www.cradlefoundation.org/brick](http://www.cradlefoundation.org/brick)
JUNE
PARENTING WORKSHOP
Fundamentals of Caring for African American Hair
Saturday, June 25, 9 am – 12 pm
The Cradle, Evanston
www.cradle.org/adoption-workshops

16th ANNUAL CRADLE CLASSIC
Monday, June 27, 10 am – 6:30 pm
Glen View Club, Golf, IL

JULY
4th ANNUAL SAYERS SUMMER SOIRÉE
Thursday, July 14, 6 pm – 10 pm
River Roast, Chicago, IL

AUGUST
PARENTING WORKSHOP
Fundamentals of Caring for African American Hair
Wednesday, August 24, 9 am – 12 pm
The Cradle, Evanston
www.cradle.org/adoption-workshops

THE CRADLE DAY AT THE RACES
Sunday, August 28, 12:30 pm – 4:30 pm
Arlington Park, Arlington Heights, IL

SEPTEMBER
ADOPTIVE FAMILY WEEKEND
YMCA Camp Minikani
September 3-5, Hubertus, WI

CRADLE FAMILY PICNIC
Saturday, July 30, 11 am – 2 pm
The Hub at Berens Park, Elmhurst, IL

CRADLE Family Picnic, Evanston, IL

PARENTING WORKSHOP
Theraplay® Family Workshop
Saturday, July 16, 10 am – 11:30 am
The Cradle, Evanston
www.cradle.org/adoption-workshops

CRADLE FAMILY PICNIC
Saturday, July 30, 11 am – 2 pm
The Hub at Berens Park, Elmhurst, IL

Join us for good food, great company and summertime fun for the whole family!
www.cradlefoundation.org/picnic

AUGUST
PARENTING WORKSHOP
Fundamentals of Caring for African American Hair
Wednesday, August 24, 9 am – 12 pm
The Cradle, Evanston
www.cradle.org/adoption-workshops

THE CRADLE DAY AT THE RACES
Sunday, August 28, 12:30 pm – 4:30 pm
Arlington Park, Arlington Heights, IL

SEPTEMBER
ADOPTIVE FAMILY WEEKEND
YMCA Camp Minikani
September 3-5, Hubertus, WI

CRADLE Family Picnic, Evanston, IL

You’ll play on the superb course that hosted the first Western Open in 1899. The day includes lunch, 18 holes of golf, contests, beverage carts and a hearty post-tournament reception.
www.cradlefoundation.org/golf

Help us celebrate and support the Sayers Center for African American Adoption at this fabulous evening of dining, dancing, mixing and mingling at an elegant spot on the Chicago River.
www.cradlefoundation.org/sss

YOU’LL PLAY ON THE SUPERB COURSE THAT HOSTED THE FIRST WESTERN OPEN IN 1899. THE DAY INCLUDES LUNCH, 18 HOLES OF GOLF, CONTESTS, BEVERAGE CARTS AND A HEARTY POST-TOURNAMENT RECEPTION.

www.cradlefoundation.org/golf

Scan here to visit
The Cradle Foundation

YOU’LL PLAY ON THE SUPERB COURSE THAT HOSTED THE FIRST WESTERN OPEN IN 1899. THE DAY INCLUDES LUNCH, 18 HOLES OF GOLF, CONTESTS, BEVERAGE CARTS AND A HEARTY POST-TOURNAMENT RECEPTION.

www.cradlefoundation.org/golf

Scan here to visit
The Cradle Foundation

THE CRADLE DAY AT THE RACES
Sunday, August 28, 12:30 pm – 4:30 pm
Arlington Park, Arlington Heights, IL

HELP US CELEBRATE AND SUPPORT THE SAYERS CENTER FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN ADOPTION AT THIS FABULOUS EVENING OF DINING, DANCING, MIXING AND MINGLING AT AN ELEGANT SPOT ON THE CHICAGO RIVER.

www.cradlefoundation.org/sss

Scan here to visit
The Cradle Foundation